Use of fertilisers in low productivity areas

*194 SHRI K. CHATHUNNI MASTER: Will the Minister of AGRICULTURE be pleased to state the steps the Central Government propose to take to step up the use of fertilisers in low productivity areas like Eastern Uttar Pradesh, Bihar, Orissa and Madhya Pradesh?

THE MINISTER OF AGRICULTURE (RAO BIRENDRA SINGH): Various steps are being taken by the Central Government to increase the use of fertilisers in the country. These include adequate and timely availability of fertilisers, extending to the States, Short Term Loans for fertilisers and other Agricultural Inputs, increase in number of retails/sale points, intensive fertiliser promotion campaign in 104 selected districts, delivery of fertilisers up to block headquarters on Government account, ensuring favourable cost benefit ratio, organising input fortnights and free distribution of minikits of seeds and fertilisers to Small and Marginal Farmers for pulses and oilseeds. The following special steps are also being taken in the Eastern States:—

1. Under Intensive Fertiliser Promotion Campaign referred to above, 9 districts in Bihar, 5 in Orissa, 11 in Madhya Pradesh and 12 in Uttar Pradesh have been selected.

2. An Indo-British Fertiliser Education Project is being implemented through the Hindustan Fertiliser Corporation Ltd. in 4 districts in Bihar, 4 in Uttar Pradesh, 4 in Orissa and 5 in Madhya Pradesh.

3. A Pilot project for increasing rice production in the Eastern States during 1984-85 has been taken in hand under which minikts of fertilisers will be distributed in these States

4. Eastern States have been given extra weightage in the allocation of short term loans for fertilisers and other agricultural inputs.

5. Special efforts have been made to facilitate flow of agricultural credit in the Eastern States.

Production and distribution of coconut seedlings in Kerala

*195. SHRI O. J. JOSEPH:

SHRI M. M. JACOB:

Will the Minister of AGRICULTURE be pleased to state:

(a) whether the Central Government have received any proposal from the Government of Kerala with regard to the production and distribution of coconut seedlings in that State; and

(b) if so, what action the Central Goverrment have taken thereon?

THE MINISTER OF AGRICULTURE (RAO BIRENDRA SINGH): (a) and (b) No specific proposal for production and distribution of coconut seedlings was received from the State Government. However, in their Memorandum on Drought relating to the year 1982-83 and submitted on the 20th June, 1983, the State Government sought assistance of Rs. 20.32 crores for procurement of seed nuts, production of seedlings, subsidy for seedlings and augmenting production and distribution of coconut seedlings in Departmental nurseries stretching over a period of 3 years. The Central Government sanctioned a series of measures, including Rs. one crore for agriculture input subsidy over and above Rs. 1.62 crores sanctioned earlier. Flexibility was allowed to use this money for input subsidies in respect of plantation crops. By a special dispensation the Centrally Sponsored Scheme for assisting small and marginal farmers was extended to cover distribution of free minikits of coconut seedlings to such farmers in Kerala.